

NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service

Kaibab National Forest

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For Immediate Release – June 12, 2006, 8 a.m.

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Kaibab National Forest Managing One Wildfire and Three Wildland Fire Use Fires

WILLIAMS, Ariz. – A wildfire and three wildland fire use fires are burning actively on the Kaibab National Forest. The wildfire is located on the North Kaibab Ranger District. One wildland fire use fire is also burning on the North Kaibab district while the other two are burning on the Tusayan Ranger District. The North Kaibab Ranger District is north of Grand Canyon National Park while the Tusayan Ranger District is south of the park.

Wildfire

Fire Name: Indian Fire

Time/Date Started: Discovered afternoon of June 9

Location: North Kaibab Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest; The Indian Fire is burning in the southwest corner of the North Kaibab Ranger District adjacent to Grand Canyon National Park. The fire is north of Monument and Crazy Jug points. It is about 19 miles southwest of Jacob Lake.

Cause: Lightning

Fuels: Timber, grass and brush

Size: 464 acres (Slight reduction in acreage due to more accurate mapping.)

% Contained: 90 %

Expected Containment: 7 p.m., June 12

Resources Committed: 3 Type 2 hand crews, 1 helicopter, 4 engines, 2 dozers, and 3 water tenders.

Total personnel = about 88

Structures: No structures are threatened.

Closures: No road/trail closures are in effect.

Summary: Suppression efforts continue to go well despite very difficult terrain. Today, firefighters will reinforce line that has been constructed around the fire. They will also continue mopping up. During mop-up operations, firefighters seek out and extinguish any remaining hotspots in the fire area.

Wildland Fire Use Fires

A wildland fire use fire is a fire that is managed for resource benefits. Before a fire is put into wildland fire use status, land managers evaluate several criteria. For example, if a fire threatens life, property or resources, it is not considered appropriate for wildland fire use and is immediately suppressed. Once a fire is put into wildland fire use status, it is actively managed, meaning that fire managers establish boundaries and define weather and fuels conditions under which the fire will be allowed to burn. All wildland fire use fires must be naturally-ignited (lightning).

WFU Name: Warm Wildland Fire Use

Time/Date Started: June 8; was discovered by fire personnel

Location: North Kaibab Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest; The Warm Wildland Fire Use Fire is located about 3 miles south of Jacob Lake adjacent to state Highway 67. It is on the west side of Highway 67.

Cause: Lightning (All WFUs must be naturally-ignited.)

Fuels: Ponderosa pine litter

Acreage Treated: 105 acres; continued growth expected

Resources Committed: 1 Type 1 (hotshot) crew, 2 fire use modules, 3 engines, miscellaneous firefighting personnel. Total personnel = about 35

Resource Benefits: Reduction of heavy accumulations of fuel on the forest floor; restoration of fire to the ecosystem; recycling of nutrients into the soil; protection of the Jacob Lake area from future high-intensity wildland fires

Closures: No road/trail closures are in effect.

Summary: The Warm Wildland Fire Use Fire burned actively yesterday and treated the landscape with low-to-moderate intensity fire. The fire's effects on the landscape have been very positive. The Warm Wildland Fire Use Fire is demonstrating how fire behaves when it is allowed to actively function as an ecological process. It is creating a mosaic across the landscape, with some areas burned at a low level of intensity and others burned at a higher intensity. The Warm Wildland Fire Use Fire is treating acres directly adjacent to state Highway 67. While the highway remains open, there have been smoke impacts. Today, fire managers expect that smoke impacts to the highway could continue. There could be possible short-term delays if necessary in order to ensure the safety of motorists. A pilot car may be used to aid safe traffic flow in the area. A fire use team (Hahnenberg) will arrive today and will take over management responsibilities of the fire use fire by tomorrow. Fire managers are extremely pleased with the Warm Wildland Fire Use Fire. Given its location and prevailing winds, the fire's treatments should help protect the Jacob Lake area from future high-intensity wildland fires.

WFU Name: West Wildland Fire Use Fire

Time/Date Started: Ignited June 8; discovered afternoon of June 9

Location: Tusayan Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest; The West Wildland Fire Use Fire is located just north of Forest Road 302 about 1 mile west of Skinner Tank. It is about 8 miles southeast of Tusayan.

Cause: Lightning (All WFUs must be naturally-ignited.)

Fuels: Ponderosa pine forest with scattered oak and brush

Acreage Treated: 600 acres; growth will continue but is expected to slow down substantially

Resources Committed: 2 engines, miscellaneous firefighting personnel. Total personnel = about 15

Resource Benefits: Reduction of heavy accumulations of fuel on the forest floor; restoration of fire to the ecosystem; recycling of nutrients into the soil; improvement of wildlife habitat

Closures: No road/trail closures are in effect. While Forest Road 302 remains open, motorists are asked to use caution in the area due to firefighting traffic. Some smoke impacts could be visible overnight along FR 302. East Rim Drive in Grand Canyon National Park will likely receive smoke during the day. Motorists should be aware that they will need to use extra caution.

Summary: The West Wildland Fire Use Fire exhibited low-to-moderate fire behavior yesterday. The fire behavior moderated greatly as the fire use fire moved into previously-treated areas. To the fire's north and east is the Scott Prescribed Burn Project area, which received prescribed fire treatments between 2002 and 2006. To the fire's east and southeast is the North Wildland Fire Use Fire, which treated 1,370 acres in 2005. As the fire use fire continues to move into these previously-burned areas, fire growth is expected to slow down and smoke production will greatly diminish. Today, firefighters will continue monitoring the fire use fire. While there was substantial smoke near Grandview Lookout yesterday, smoke production is expected to diminish greatly today. Smoke is expected to continue moving away from Tusayan and Grand Canyon Airport. The effects of the West Wildland Fire Use Fire

on the landscape have been very positive. Forest managers use wildland fire use fires like West to help meet resource objectives such as recycling nutrients into the soil and enhancing habitat for wildlife. Wildland fire use fires also help to clean up accumulated forest litter, thus reducing the threat of high-intensity wildland fires.

WFU Name: Bar Wildland Fire Use

Time/Date Started: Discovered June 11

Location: Tusayan Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest; The Bar Wildland Fire Use Fire is located about 3 miles west of the junction of state Highway 64 and Forest Road 307 in the Upper Basin area. It is about 16 miles southeast of Tusayan.

Cause: Lightning (All WFUs must be naturally-ignited.)

Fuels: Pinyon/juniper woodland and grass

Acreage Treated: 100

Resources Committed: 3 engines, miscellaneous firefighting personnel. Total personnel = about 20

Resource Benefits: Reduction of heavy accumulations of fuel on the forest floor; restoration of fire to the ecosystem; recycling of nutrients into the soil

Closures: No road/trail closures are in effect.

Summary: Fire managers will continue monitoring the Bar Wildland Fire Use Fire. No smoke impacts expected to Tusayan.

For more information, please call Jackie Denk at 928-635-5607.